

Message Text

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13

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ADP-00 IO-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

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----- 024218

R 091615 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7842

INFO AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USUN NY 401

AMEMBASSY MADRID

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E. O. 11652: DECONTROL 4/10/74

TAGS: PGOV, MZ, AO

SUBJ: MINISTER OF OVERSEAS COMMENTS ON LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS IN OVERSEAS TERRITORIES

REF: (A) LOURENCO MARQUES 197; (B) LUANDA 178

1. SUMMARY: OVERSEAS MINISTER SILVA CUNHA, WHO
USUALLY SHUNS LIMELIGHT, TOOK OCCASION OF ELECTIONS
TO LOCAL LEGISLATIVE BODIES IN OVERSEAS TERRITORIES TO
GIVE UNUSUAL PRESS INTERVIEW APRIL 2 TO LISBON DAILY
O SEculo AND UNPRECEDENTED FULL- SCALE PRESS CONFERENCE
APRIL 6. HE USED BOTH MECHANISMS TO EMPHASIZE SOCIAL,
ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN OVERSEAS
PORTUGAL, PARTICULARLY LATTER. END SUMMARY.

2. SILVA CUNHA' S EMERGENCE FROM HIS PREFERRED
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TACITURNITY WAS CLEARLY OCCASIONED BY RECENT CONCLUSION OF OVERSEAS LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS THE " FIRST GREAT ACT" INITIATING THE POLICY OF BROAD DECENTRALIZATION OF GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION IN THE OVERSEAS TERRITORIES. HE STRESSED THAT ELECTIONS REPRESENTED NOTABLE INCREASE IN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION BY ALL ETHNIC GROUPS, DESPITE " INTENSIVE CAMPAIGN" BY INSURGENT GROUP LEADERS URGING ABSTENTION. HE CITED REGISTRATION INCREASES RANGING FROM 11 PERCENT (PROVINCE UNSPECIFIED) TO 300 PERCENT (TIMOR), AND VOTER TURNOUTS RANGING FROM 68 PER CENT (MACAU) TO 92 PER CENT (MOZAMBIQUE). COMMENTING ON FOREIGN PRESS CRITICISM OF DISPROPORTIONATELY SMALL NUMBER OF REGISTERED VOTERS IN RELATION TO TOTAL POPULATIONS, HE STATED THAT SUCH CRITICISMS WOULD BE JUSTIFIED IN CASE OF DEVELOPED COUNTRIES BUT NOT IN UNDERDEVELOPED PORTUGUESE OVERSEAS TERRITORIES. " IT WOULD HAVE BEEN EASY FOR US TO PRESENT IMPRESSIVE NUMBERS IF WE WERE NOT DETERMINED TO WORK WITH HONESTY, GRANTING THE RIGHT TO VOTE ONLY TO THOSE WHO CAN CONSCIENTIOUSLY EXERCISE IT." HE EMPHASIZED IN THIS RESPECT THAT EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS NOW UNDER WAY WOULD SOON BRING ABOUT INCREASE IN THESE NUMBERS.

3. NOTING THAT MAJORITY OF NEW MEMBERS OF MOST OVERSEAS LEGISLATURES WERE BORN IN RESPECTIVE PROVINCES/ STATES, SILVA CUNHA GAVE FOLLOWING BREAKDOWN:

	BORN IN PROVINCE/ STATE	BORN IN PORTUGAL	BORN ELSEWHERE
CAPE VERDE	20	1	-
GUINE	15	2	-
S. TOME/ PRINCIPE	9	6	1
ANGOLA	23	29	1
MOZAMBIQUE	28	19	3
MACAO	11	2	-
TIMOR	16	4	-

(" ELSEWHERE INCLUDED S. TOME: 1 FROM CAPE VERDE; MOZAMBIQUE; TWO FROM GOA AND 1 FROM MACAU; ANGOLA: ONE FOREIGN- BORN BUT PORTUGUESE NATIONAL.)
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IN RESPONSE TO PRESS CONFERENCE QUESTION ABOUT RACIAL

COMPOSITION OF LEGISLATURES, SILVA CUNHA CLAIMED THAT IN MOZAMBIQUE THERE IS A MAJORITY OF BLACKS AMONG " THE ELECTED MEMBERS WHO WERE BORN IN THE TERRITORY ," SAME BEING TRUE IN GUINEA AND SAO TOME BUT NOT IN ANGOLA. (SINCE ONLY 23 OF 53 MEMBERS OF ANGOLAN LEGISLATURE WERE BORN IN ANGOLA, THIS PRESUMABLY MEANS MAXIMUM OF ELEVEN BLACK LEGISLATORS IN ANGOLA. USUALLY RELIABLE PRESS SOURCE INDICATES MOZAMBIQUE LEGISLATURE HAS 24 WHITES, 26 NON- WHITES; ASSUMING LATTER FIGURE INCLUDES THE 2 FROM GOA AND 1 FROM MACAU, THIS WOULD MEAN MAXIMUM OF 23 BLACKS IN MOZAMBIQUE LEGISLATURE.)

4. SPECIFYING VARIOUS ASPECTS OF " AUTONOMY" NOW ACCORDED TO OVERSEAS TERRITORIES, MINISTER STATED THAT OVERSEAS MINISTRY EXISTS PRINCIPALLY TO PROVIDE GENERAL ORIENTTION, COORDINATION BETWEEN PROVINCES WITHIN GENERAL NATIONAL POLICY, AND LINK BETWEEN PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS AND VARIOUS CENTRAL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS. ONLY LIMITATIONS ON PROVINCIAL ACTION ARE THOSE IMPOSED BY " GENERAL INTERESTS OF PORTUGUESE STATE," WITH CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OF COURSE RESERVING TO ITSELF EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND DEFENSE. HE REJECTED SUGGESTION THAT OVERSEAS MINISTRY FUNCTIONS COULD BE PARCELED OUT TO OTHER GOP DEPARTMENTS, BUT DID STATE THAT NEW PROVINCIAL " AUTONOMY" WOULD REQUIRE REORGANIZATION OF OVERSEAS MINISTRY, LEGISLATION TO WHICH EFFECT IS NOW BEING PREPARED. IN RESPONSE TO VARIOUS PRESS CONFERENCE QUESTIONS, MINISTER STATED THAT " MAJORITY" OF TWENTY ADDITIONAL SEATS IN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN LISBON WILL GO FOR OVERSEAS REPRESENTATIVES, GAVE DETAILS ON IMPROVEMENTS IN TERRITORIAL PAYMENTS' SITUATION, INDICATED THAT INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS HAD GIVEN PORTUGAL CLEAN BILL OF HEALTH FOLLOWING VISIT LAST YEAR TO MOZAMBIQUE JAILS, AND SAID REPORTS THAT SPAIN HAD PROMISED MILITARY AID IN TROOPS AND ARMS TO PORTUGAL WERE WITHOUT FOUNDATION.
POST

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